

Remarks

Applicants and the undersigned are most grateful for the time and effort accorded the instant application by the Examiner.

Claims 1-17 were pending in the instant application at the time of the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Guerin et al, WO 02/100905 (hereinafter "Guerin"). The Office is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action in light of the following remarks.

The Guerin reference was published on December 19, 2002. The present application was filed in the U.S. on December 4, 2003, and makes claim to the priority date of foreign filed Canadian Application serial number 2,413,607, which was filed on December 5, 2002. Both the claim for foreign priority, as set forth in the Applicants' Declaration, and a certified copy of the Canadian Application for patent were filed at the time of the filing of the U.S. Application under examination.

Since the present application has the right to assert its foreign priority date and because said date overcomes the publication date of the cited reference, Applicants' respectfully request the withdrawal of the present rejections.

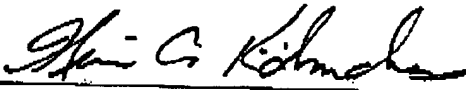
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1-17 fully distinguish over the state of the art and are allowable at this juncture. Notice to the

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effect is hereby earnestly solicited. If there are any further issues in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Nicanor A. Köhncke
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 57,348

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LANXESS Corporation
Law & Intellectual Property Department
111 RIDC Park West Drive
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15275-1112
(412) 809-2234
FACSIMILE PHONE NUMBER:
(412) 809-1054

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